

Shepherd Retires After 50 Years With NDOT



Robert Shepherd recently retired after 50 years with the Nevada Department of Transportation.

Beginning in construction, Shepherd moved on to a 40-year career of bridge inspection, including inspection of the state's first pre-stressed concrete beams. There hasn't been much that Shepherd hasn't inspected, including pipes, material, culverts, asphalt plants and bridges.

Starting out in the Winnemucca office on a project near the Oregon border, a listing of the areas Shepherd has worked would draw a pretty good map of Nevada: Winnemucca, Gabbs, Yerington, Tonopah, Wells, Carlin, Caliente, Eureka, Overton, Reno, North Las Vegas and Las Vegas.

He's outlasted several of the bridges he inspected, including the railroad bridge over I-15. "That was actually the first project I worked on in Las Vegas. I've watched the original Tropicana, the original Dunes, original Spring Mountain and the original Sahara Interchange come down."

At a spry 76, you will no longer find Shepherd inspecting overhead structures. "After Ann Road Interchange and the Cheyenne Interchange, I decided I was just too old to be climbing over falsework and rebar, so now I'm back to being a grade inspector."

What makes Shepherd so valuable is not just his knowledge, but also his willingness to share. "Bob has seen and done everything there is to do in 50 years," co-worker Tom Stevenson said. "He's a great mentor. When you want to find something about a job, anything to do with plans, Bob can help you figure it out. He's fabulous to work with and one of the best inspectors I've ever met."

Shepherd has never lost his fascination with construction. "It's been interesting work, enjoyable. It would have to be pretty enjoyable to spend 40 years on bridges."